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Pennsylvania Press Release

PRESS RELEASE

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ANNUAL EGG PRODUCTION IN PENNSYLVANIA UP 3 PERCENT FROM PREVIOUS YEAR

HARRISBURG --- Annual egg production in Pennsylvania for the year ending November 30, 1999 was 6.14 billion eggs, 3 percent more than the 5.98 billion produced in 1998, according to the Pennsylvania Agricultural Statistics Service (PASS). There was an average of 22.6 million layers in Pennsylvania laying flocks during the 12 month period, 3 percent more than the 22.0 million the previous year. Average annual production per layer was 271 eggs, unchanged from the previous year.

All chicken inventory (excluding commercial broilers) as of December 1, 1999 totaled 27.9 million, down 2 percent from the 28.5 million one year earlier. Pennsylvania ranked 6th in chicken inventory on December 1, 1999. Pennsylvania ranked 5th in layers on hand December 1. Only Ohio, with 31.3 million, Iowa, with 27.0 million, California, with 25.2 million, and Indiana, with 22.9 million, were the only states outranking Pennsylvania in layers. Commonwealth flocks included 22.8 million layers 20 weeks old and older, up less than 1 percent; 5.0 million pullets less than 20 weeks old, down 12 percent; and 115,000 other chickens, up 10 percent from the inventory on December 1, 1998. The average value per bird on hand December 1, 1999 was \$1.80. Total value of all flocks in Pennsylvania on December 1, 1999 was estimated at 50.2 million dollars, up 4 percent from the 48.4 million dollars in 1998.

Nationally, egg production during the year ending November 30, 1999 totaled a record high 82.7 billion eggs, up 4 percent from the previous year. Layer numbers averaged 322 million, up 3 percent from 1998. The annual average production per layer on hand in 1999 was 257 eggs, compared with the 1998 average of 255 eggs per layer.

The inventory of all chickens in the United States (excluding commercial broilers) totaled 436 million on December 1, 1999, up 3 percent from a year ago. Hens and pullets of laying age plus pullets over 13 weeks old but not of laying age on hand totaled 368 million, up 2 percent from December 1, 1998. The average value of chickens in the nation's flocks on December 1 was \$2.65, down 4 cents from 1998. Total value of the nation's flocks was estimated at 1.15 billion dollars, up 1 percent from a year ago.